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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 4 May 1995, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan)

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95-80953 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

The PRESIDENT declared open the resumed organizational session of the Economic and Social Council for 1995.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1995/2 and Add.1 and 2, E/1995/54, E/1995/58, E/1995/L.6 and Corr.1, E/1995/L.12, E/1995/L.15, E/1995/INF/4) (continued)

The PRESIDENT, drawing attention to the provisional agenda for the organizational session for 1995 (E/1995/2), proposed that a new item entitled "Social, humanitarian and human rights questions: Reports of subsidiary bodies, conferences and related questions: Human rights questions" should be added to the provisional agenda for the Council's resumed organizational session.

He would take it that the Council agreed to the proposal.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT drew attention to Council decision 1995/214, entitled "Consideration of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development in the operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation segment", recalling that, at its fifth plenary meeting, on 10 February 1995, the Council had decided that, at its resumed organizational session, it would discuss the manner in which the discussion on the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development could be organized during the high-level meeting of the operational activities segment of the substantive session of 1995 of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) said that his delegation wished to introduce some changes into the agenda for the high-level meeting to be held on the first day of the operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation segment. Since that agenda appeared in decision 1995/213, he wondered what procedure could be used to modify a decision already adopted by the Council. Canada wished to make two specific proposals: (a) to add the following sentence at the end of the second paragraph: "A secondary issue will be a preliminary exchange on the follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Summit for Social Development; focus could be given to the direction to be taken by the United Nations system to take

an integrated approach to social and development issues"; and (b) to insert, after the words "in particular, with issues" in the first line of the third paragraph, the words "covered by both the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit for Social Development".

The PRESIDENT said he was not certain whether or not the proposal constituted an amendment. If it did, it was inadmissible because a decision, once adopted, could not be amended. If it was a new decision, it would have to be submitted as a new draft decision, and the Council would then decide whether or not to adopt it.

Mr. STOBY (Director, Division for Policy Coordination and Economic and Social Council Affairs) said that the matter of presentation could be resolved very simply. A decision could be proposed orally, which would start by recalling Economic and Social Council decisions 1995/213 and 1995/214, go on to refer to the secondary issue of the high-level meeting, and then set forth in a second paragraph how that could be addressed. That would avoid cumbersome procedures and legal obstacles.

The PRESIDENT, summing up, said that the Council could either adopt the decision right away by consensus or ask the Canadian delegation to submit it in writing so that the members could consider it and take a decision the following day; it was up to the members to decide.

Mrs. REBONG (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and supported by Cuba, pointed out that, once adopted, a decision could not be amended and that she would prefer to have the text in writing. The issue of the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development should be considered at the high-level meeting of the operational activities segment of the Council's substantive session.

Mr. CONTINI (France) agreed that it would be best to see the proposal in writing before taking a decision; considering that the spirit of the proposed addition was already reflected in decision 1995/213, he suggested that the Council should take note of the Canadian representative's comments, instead of initiating negotiations on the adoption of a new decision.

The PRESIDENT, in view of the opinions expressed, invited the Canadian delegation to produce a text which could then be translated and subsequently considered.

He then drew attention to Council decision 1995/218, entitled "Postponement of the 1995 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations and of the second session of the Working Group on the Review of the Arrangements for Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations" and informed members that the second session of that Working Group would take place from 8 to 12 May 1995 and that the 1995 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations was scheduled to take place from 12 to 23 June 1995.

Inclusion of an additional item (E/1995/58)

The PRESIDENT drew attention to document E/1995/58, which contained a letter dated 3 February 1995 from the Chairman of the Commission for Social Development addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council, the annex to which contained a draft resolution entitled "Tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year and world programme of action for youth to the year 2000 and beyond" and invited members to comment on it.

Mr. ELDEEB (Egypt), speaking as Chairman of the open-ended Working Group on Youth established by the Commission for Social Development, proposed that the issue be included as an additional item on the agenda for its current organizational session and asked the Council to postpone consideration of the item until formal and informal consultations with the groups concerned and with delegations had been completed. That would give him an opportunity to explain the work being done by the Working Group.

The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council members agreed to the proposal.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT, referring to documents E/1995/L.6 and E/1995/L.6/Corr.1 on the adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters, said that, following informal consultations, a general agreement had been reached on the basic programme of work. However, the operational activities segment of the programme of work would be prolonged for one more day and the programme would be adjusted accordingly, pursuant to the resolution on restructuring, which established a five-day segment on operational activities. If the Council members had any comments, a revised programme of work would be published in mid-May.

Mr. FLORENCIO (Brazil) recalled that at its third session, held in New York in April 1995, the Commission on Sustainable Development had decided to

establish an intergovernmental panel on forests, which would hold its first meeting in late June. Since that meeting could not be held without the Council's approval, he suggested that the issue should be considered under agenda item 3 (Basic programme of work of the Council) of the resumed organizational session of the Council which was scheduled to begin in about 10 days.

The PRESIDENT said he would take note of the Brazilian delegation's suggestion.

Mr. GERVAIS (Côte d'Ivoire), referring to an issue raised at the preceding session - the access of permanent missions to United Nations databases - suggested that the Council should recommend that such access be granted immediately, and should therefore consider the issue at its next substantive session.

The PRESIDENT said he understood that the issue would be addressed at the next substantive session during the segment on general issues.

Mr. DELACROIX (France) said he supported the proposal of the representative of Brazil concerning the intergovernmental panel on forests, and emphasized the importance of the establishment of that panel and the desirability of enabling it to begin work as soon as possible.

Mr. SAHRAOUI (Algeria) asked how many resumed sessions the Council had scheduled for 1995.

The PRESIDENT said that that had yet to be decided. For that reason, he had taken note of the proposal put forward by Brazil and supported by France. As matters stood, it was likely that a resumed organizational session, probably lasting one day, would be held prior to the substantive session, in late May or early June.

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) asked whether document E/1995/L.6/Corr.1 had been adopted definitively or whether it would be considered again at a later meeting, since he wished to make a proposal before it was adopted.

The PRESIDENT said that the document would be adopted at the substantive session after circulation of the revised version, which should be before the Council by 15 May. That revised version would be further considered in order to formulate a detailed programme of work reflecting the general consensus. It would only be adopted by the Economic and Social Council itself.

Mr. FERNANDEZ PALACIOS (Cuba) expressed his concern at the fact that full documentation was not being received and asked the Secretariat to take appropriate steps to ensure that all documents were made available at the same time in order to avoid continuous interruptions in the work of delegations.

The PRESIDENT took note of the suggestion made by the delegation of Cuba and said that appropriate steps would be taken.

Draft decision E/1995/L.15

Mr. PAPADATOS (Vice-President)* said that delegations had before them a report to the Council, an unofficial document that he had produced for the simple reason that while chairing an informal group on documentation he had not wished to add to the Secretariat's work by requesting the preparation of one more document. The first page indicated step by step the gestation of a document and the different stages in its preparation. Delegations could conceptualize the process by looking at the chart portraying the various stages. The second page dealt with the issue of deadlines and could also help delegations to understand the different deadlines involved for different documents.

Immediately after the Council's organizational session the President had announced his decision to devote as much time as possible to thorough preparation of the regular session of the Economic and Social Council in the context of enlarged Bureau meetings. At the first such meeting it had become apparent that the regular session of the Council could not be organized unless the programme of work was issued on time for consideration by delegations and all requirements pertaining to the timely availability of documents were met.

Delays in the distribution of documents had become so severe that any programme of work of the Economic and Social Council was at risk of being compromised. In brief, a firm schedule for the regular session of the Council could neither be adhered to nor issued in advance because of the uncertainty surrounding the availability of documents, which was a dangerous development. It implied that it was the documentation that dictated the Council's programme

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* This statement has been given full coverage in the summary record in accordance with the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council during the meeting.

of work and that delegations had no control over it. There was an intimate relationship between the programme of work and the availability of documentation. The one could not exist without the other. It was obvious that the two went together and that the programme and documents must be available on time. For those compelling reasons an informal open-ended group on documentation had been established. It had been entrusted with ensuring that the six-week rule was complied with and with identifying the causes for documentation delays that had plagued the Council for years.

All were fully aware that the problem of documentation was not a Council problem but system-wide, and that it affected the lives and work of all delegates in the United Nations. The exercise had nothing to do with cost-cutting or with reform. The end-product should be to obtain the timely issuance of as many documents as possible, a necessary condition for the smooth and efficient conduct of the substantive session of the Council for 1995. The open-ended group had met twice and he had received a lot of encouragement for his efforts.

With reference to the measures taken so far, the provisional programme of work of the Economic and Social Council was already out in all official languages and was in the hands of delegations. For the first time delegations had the benefit of an early programme of work of the Council. One of the advantages of such a programme was that it allowed ministries and missions to prepare their staff for debates and to make early travel arrangements. It also helped in optimizing the composition of delegations by allowing them to send the right people to participate in meetings in accordance with the dates established for the consideration of specific items.

A letter had been sent to all competent departments of the Secretariat for them to take care of the delays associated with the so-called production process (stage III), explained on page 1 of the report. The letter, signed by the President of the Council, had been sent because the majority of delays occurred at that stage. The letter brought out the issue of deadlines. It seemed that the letter and concern expressed by the Bureau had gone beyond the level of awareness-raising in the Secretariat and were being taken seriously. Many responses had come in, which appeared to indicate that the process in stage III had been accelerated. Only some of them had given specific reasons why deadlines had not been met. Subsequently a meeting had taken place with the

Officer-in-Charge of the Documents Control Section in the Office of Conference and Support Services, and a similar letter had been sent to that Office.

It seemed that major delays occurred at stage V (namely the Office of Conference and Support Services), mainly because of late submission of documents. Moreover a number of documents were submitted in incorrect editorial form, thus requiring substantive corrections and time-consuming rewriting.

Late submitters often penalized departments that met submission deadlines. For example, the proposed programme budget, a document of close to 2,000 pages, had been received only three weeks before the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) had been scheduled to meet on 15 May, which coincided with the six-week deadline for the Economic and Social Council. It appeared that everything else, regardless of the date of submission, had been put on the back burner to accommodate the CPC documentation. With minor exceptions if documents were submitted on time to Conference Services there were no problems in meeting the six-week deadline.

He drew attention to a number of facts and the state of play regarding certain key reports for the substantive session: the total number of documents for the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council for 1995 was 86, but as of the previous week only six documents had met the 12-week rule and only eight the 10-week rule. It was projected that 20 documents of the 86 would be issued by 15 May, when the six-week deadline fell due. The Office of Conference and Support Services was already processing late submissions faster than expected.

He noted that the following reports would not be issued on time (six-week rule) and that it was not clear when they would be available to delegations: a report on the development of Africa for the high-level segment; three reports expected for the coordination segment; a report on operational activities (triennial review); a report of the Commission on Population and Development; a report on assistance to the Palestinian people; a report on Israeli settlements; and a report on follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development.

At the last meeting of the open-ended informal group on documentation he had submitted some proposals that all the participants in the group had approved of and which he had promised to submit to the Council in the form of a draft decision. The open-ended working group had also discussed how the issue of

documentation was to be followed up on. A tentative agreement had been reached that he should continue to monitor the situation, report to the enlarged Bureau and submit a final report to the substantive session.

Introducing draft decision E/1995/L.15 concerning documentation, he said that the document, which had three parts, contained a small yet sensible innovation comprising an indication in the provisional programme of work document of what reports would be available under each item. So far delegations had not had one document indicating both. That should greatly facilitate the consideration of documents by delegations. In the draft decision there would thus be a listing, side by side, in addition to agenda items, of the reports expected under each segment and/or item.

Paragraph (b) of the draft decision would require that a report on the status of documentation should be available three weeks before the resumed organizational session of the Council. It was his view that that was a necessary measure for members of the Economic and Social Council and observers to have an idea of where matters stood regarding documentation, for the Bureau and Council to be able to act, and for the latter to be able to deal with the issue during the resumed organizational session.

Paragraph (c) of the draft decision dealt with a very unfortunate situation that all had experienced, namely, that documents were issued one or two days before the item was to be considered by the Council or on the same day. That was unfortunate, and some explanation would be needed, with some form of accountability for delays. Accordingly the officer responsible for the introduction of the report should be accountable to the Council and give reasons for the delay.

He trusted that the Council would adopt draft decision E/1995/L.15 by consensus, bearing in mind that no major problems had emerged during the informal consultations.

Mr. DELACROIX (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the Union and France were aware of the problems caused by delays in the distribution of documents and the impact on the effective functioning of the Economic and Social Council. In that regard the Vice-President's report was opportune in that it clarified the procedure followed by the Secretariat and its limitations. It had increased awareness on the part of the various departments of the Secretariat and members of the Council concerning the seriousness of the

problem. It was to be hoped that the Vice-President's work would achieve positive results, particularly with regard to the distribution of documentation. The Council should thus adopt draft decision E/1995/L.15.

He proposed that the Vice-President's full statement should appear as an annex to the summary record of the meeting.

Mrs. REBONG (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, in her view, the President should say when a decision must be taken on draft decision E/1995/L.15.

Mr. GERVAIS (Côte d'Ivoire) said that everything possible must be done to avoid delays in the distribution of documents. Draft decision E/1995/L.15 should be adopted immediately and should serve as a reference for members of the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat.

The PRESIDENT said that two proposals had been made, namely, that the report of the Vice-President should appear as a document of the Economic and Social Council (proposal by France); and that a decision should be taken on the matter that same day (proposal by Côte d'Ivoire).

Mr. OTUYELU (Nigeria) said that the Vice-President's report not only drew attention to the problems that existed but also suggested solutions to them. In view of its balanced content, Nigeria supported the proposal by the representative of Côte d'Ivoire that a decision should be taken on the report and that the report should appear as a document of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. DESAI (Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) said that the Secretariat was fully aware that, in order for the Economic and Social Council to function effectively, it was necessary to ensure the timely distribution of documents to delegations, without the delays that occasionally occurred.

The delays in the distribution of reports of intergovernmental bodies were due to the fact that, because of the increasing number of meetings of such bodies, it was not always possible to schedule those meetings far enough ahead to enable their reports to be prepared and translated well in advance of the Council's sessions.

With regard to the documentation for the series of coordination meetings, high-level meetings and meetings on operational activities, delays occurred because decisions on the items to be considered at each of those series of

meetings were only taken in February at the earliest. Moreover, documents for those series of meetings underwent a long and complicated process of preparation, since they had to include system-wide information and that involved holding detailed inter-agency consultations. That careful process of preparation was particularly important in the Council's case, given the coordinating role that it was called upon to play.

He considered the discussion held in the open-ended informal working group and in the Council, and the proposals made, to be positive. He was prepared to give explanations when a report was late, and he assured members that the Secretariat was doing everything in its power to prepare documentation on time. In that connection, he invited delegations to visit the competent departments during any weekend to see for themselves how staff worked tirelessly to prepare the required reports.

Despite the resource constraints it faced, to date the Secretariat had not refused to prepare any report requested by the Council, nor had it requested additional resources, believing that delegations had shown that they understood the pressure of work involved in preparing documentation. He assured delegations that everything possible would be done to ensure that at the Council's next and subsequent sessions the documentation would be ready on time.

The PRESIDENT said that it was clearly necessary to improve the documentation system. All Council members and all Secretariat staff were working towards that goal and had the same interest in ensuring that documentation was of the highest quality, was issued on time and was useful to the Council. However, those objectives had not always been achieved, in that on numerous occasions documents had not been ready by the specified deadlines. For example, the report presented at the current meeting by Mr. Papadatos, Vice-President of the Council, stated that only 20 of the 86 documents required for the Council's substantive session would be issued by the date stipulated in the rules, namely, six weeks before the start of the session. A solution must be found to the continuing problems with documentation and he hoped that at the current organizational session the Council would help to find a solution to those difficulties.

Mrs. REBONG (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, referred to the proposal that the report of the open-ended informal working group on documentation should be included in the official documentation

of the Council. Her delegation felt that the report was extremely useful and offered an in-depth analysis of substantive issues; however, before the Council took a decision on the proposal, the Secretariat should clarify whether a document prepared by an informal working group had the appropriate legal status to be included in the official documentation of a session of the Council.

The PRESIDENT asked whether the proposal made by France was that the text of the report presented orally by Mr. Papadatos should be included in the official documentation of the Council.

Mr. DELACROIX (France) said that his delegation had merely suggested that the oral report by Mr. Papadatos should be reproduced for information purposes as an annex to the report of the open-ended informal working group on documentation.

The PRESIDENT asked whether the French delegation would be in favour of reproducing the statement by Mr. Papadatos in extenso in the summary record of the meeting. That would also meet the concern expressed by the delegation of the Philippines, since the report itself would not be included in the official documentation but the oral statement by Mr. Papadatos would be reproduced in the summary record. Since that proposal met the concerns of both delegations, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the other members of the Council were in favour of proceeding along those lines.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to consider draft decision E/1995/L.15, entitled "Draft proposal submitted by the Vice-President of the Council, Mr. George Papadatos (Greece), on the basis of open-ended informal consultations", and asked whether the members of the Council wished to take any decisions on the matter.

Mr. DELACROIX (France), speaking as the representative of his country and not as the representative of the European Union, proposed that the following amendment should be made to draft decision E/1995/L.15: in the fourth line of paragraph (a), the words "in all the official languages" should be added after the words "agenda items".

The PRESIDENT said that, if no other delegation wished to take the floor on draft decision E/1995/L.15, he would take it that the members of the Council wished to adopt the draft decision, as orally amended by the delegation of France.

It was so decided.

Mr. AGGREY (Ghana) asked what was the status of the document just distributed to delegations following the adoption of the draft decision.

The PRESIDENT said that it was an unofficial document which Mr. Papadatos had been kind enough to prepare for information purposes to explain the reasons for his oral statement which was to be reproduced in extenso in the summary record of the meeting.

Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece) thanked all delegations, the Bureau and all those people who had assisted him in preparing the document.

SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Draft decision E/1995/L.12

The PRESIDENT, responding to the request by Mr. Musa Hitam, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights, contained in document E/1995/54, invited the Council to consider, under item 10 of the agenda that had just been adopted, draft decision E/1995/L.12, entitled "Situation of human rights in Burundi", which the Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-first session, had decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council for adoption.

Mr. DESAGNEAUX (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, expressed the European Union's profound concern at the deteriorating situation in Burundi, which was increasingly characterized by serious violations of human rights and constant acts of violence instigated by extremists. The European Union had called repeatedly for everything possible to be done to bring about national reconciliation and the restoration of democracy in Burundi. For that reason, the European Union, together with the delegation of Burundi and the Group of African States, had played an active role in the elaboration of the draft resolution entitled "Situation of human rights in Burundi", which the Commission on Human Rights had adopted by consensus on 8 March.

In that resolution, the Commission had demanded that its Chairman appoint rapidly, after consultation with the Bureau, a special rapporteur with the task of drawing up a report on the situation of human rights in Burundi. The European Union noted with satisfaction the speed with which the Chairman of the Commission had appointed the Special Rapporteur.

The situation required that the Special Rapporteur should be able to commence his mission as soon as possible and that he should have all the

necessary resources. Although some improvement has been observed in recent weeks, the situation of human rights in Burundi continued to give cause for concern. Consolidation of the process of national reconciliation in Burundi and a return to normal democratic life were of the utmost priority. The European Union reiterated its readiness to participate in strengthening the measures taken by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights to provide support, in particular, for the dispatch to Burundi of a team of human rights experts. Action was already being taken in that regard and a credit of $3 million European Currency Units had been provided to cover the cost of sending those experts. The modalities for the European Union's assistance in strengthening the rule of law and the administration of justice in Burundi would be determined when the Burundi authorities indicated what their needs were.

The European Union hoped that the international community, which was already playing an active role through the person of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, would direct all its efforts towards national reconciliation in Burundi. It therefore hoped that the Council would adopt the draft decision currently under consideration. Nevertheless, it wished to know whether the adoption of the draft decision would have financial implications for the programme budget.

Mr. MARRERO (United States of America) said that he supported draft decision E/1995/12 and proposed that, in the English version, the word "demand" in the second line should be replaced by "request", and the words "drawing up" in the fourth line should be replaced by "preparing".

Mr. FERNÁNDEZ-PALACIOS (Cuba) said that as a member of the Commission on Human Rights, his country had joined in the consensus which had resulted in the adoption of resolution 1995/90, entitled "Situation of human rights in Burundi". His Government was concerned at the situation in Burundi and hoped that the serious problems in that country would be solved.

As a matter of procedure, however, his delegation was concerned at the practice of considering substantive issues at the Council's organizational session. That was not the first time that the Council had received, at its organizational session, letters from the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights dealing with substantive issues that should be considered at the Council's substantive session. While his delegation felt that draft decision

E/1995/L.12 should be adopted by consensus, that should not create a precedent for considering substantive issues at the Council's organizational sessions.

Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Economic and Social Council), replying to the question by the representative of France, said that the adoption of draft decision E/1995/L.12 would not have programme budget implications.

The PRESIDENT said that if no other delegation wished to take the floor on draft decision E/1995/L.12, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decision, as orally amended, by consensus.

It was so decided.

Mr. SAHRAOUI (Observer for Algeria) recalled that his country had introduced the draft resolution on Burundi in the Commission on Human Rights at Geneva. Algeria welcomed the Council's adoption of a draft decision on the issue as evidence of the international community's profound concern for the African countries and for the crises affecting some of them. His Government hoped that the international community would continue to keep such issues under review and that the Council would adopt similar decisions whenever such serious situations arose in Africa.

The PRESIDENT said that the Council had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 10.

COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING (continued)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to resume consideration of agenda item 4, entitled "Committee for Development Planning", and drew attention to Council decision 1995/215 of 10 February entitled "Committee for Development Planning", in which the Council, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to submit nominations to the Council at its resumed organizational session in May 1995 or, at the latest, at its substantive session of 1995, for reconstitution of the membership of the Committee for Development Planning, and to reconvene the reconstituted Committee before the end of 1995. The Secretariat had informed him that the nominations would be submitted to the Council in July at its substantive session. The Council had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 4.

UNITED NATIONS JOINT AND CO-SPONSORED PROGRAMME ON HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS/ACQUIRED IMMUNODEFICIENCY SYNDROME (HIV/AIDS)

Mr. BUTLER (Australia) said that in its resolution 1994/24 the Economic and Social Council had decided that consultations should be held,

inter alia, on the question of the composition of the Programme Coordinating Board for the Joint and Co-sponsored Programme. The Council had requested him, as President of the Council at the time of the adoption of resolution 1994/24, to undertake those consultations.

As a result, the following agreement had been reached: the Programme Coordinating Board would comprise 22 members elected for a three-year term, as follows: five from the Group of African States, five from the Group of Asian States, three from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, two from the Group of Eastern European States and seven from the Group of Western European and Other States.

In order to endure continuity on the Board, following the first election there would be a drawing of lots in which one third of those elected would have a term of one year, one third a term of two years and one third a term of three years. The first election would be conducted by the Economic and Social Council. Further consultations would be held to decide which body or bodies would be responsible for conducting subsequent elections.

Further consultations would also be required on the question of the participation in the Board of representatives of the six co-sponsoring organizations and non-governmental organizations.

In addition to Member States of the United Nations, observer States would also be able to submit their candidacy for election. It was proposed that the first elections should take place in the Council on 1 June 1995, at which time it was expected that the Council would meet to consider the future programme of work of the Joint and Co-sponsored Programme on the basis, inter alia, of the report of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations. The report of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations would be available by 12 May and it was hoped that, following its consideration of the report, the Council would meet on 1 and 2 June to complete another part of its mandate, as provided for in paragraph 11 of resolution 1994/24, namely, to make its recommendations on the Programme and to elect the members of the Programme Coordinating Board.

The issue of the group from which Japan would be eligible for election had been addressed and it had been agreed that Japan should be included in the Group of Asian States and consequently, that the Board should have 22 rather than 21 members. He emphasised that in arriving at that agreement, it had been recognized by all concerned that the agreement was unique to the Joint and

Co-sponsored Programme and its Programme Coordinating Board and thus did not, and could not, form the basis of a precedent to be followed in other organs. It should also be underlined that the agreement reflected the very serious universal concern that the Programme should be given a Programme Coordinating Board without further delay in order to facilitate its substantive work. For those reasons, he urged Council acceptance of that agreement and of the proposal that the Programme Coordinating Board should be elected on 1 June 1995.

Mr. AMORIM (Brazil) said that there was no time to lose in dealing with an epidemic which affected all countries equally, whether developing or developed. By the end of 1994 there had been 4.5 million AIDS cases world wide and 18 million adults and 1.5 million children infected with the human immunodeficiency virus. As one of the countries most seriously affected by the pandemic, Brazil was firmly committed to achieving the Programme's goals.

Concerning the consideration of the report of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations, he emphasized that while the Programme could not be carried out without the full participation of the six Co-sponsoring Organizations, it should not be limited to the inter-agency coordination of activities but should serve as a catalyst for mobilizing resources to combat that terrible pandemic.

Mr. KANE (Mauritania), speaking as Chairman of the Group of African States, said that while the Group had gone along with the agreement so as not to delay the establishment of the Programme Coordinating Board, it wished to emphasize that the agreement on the allocation of seats to the different regional groups should not create a precedent and welcomed the fact that Mr. Butler's report made the same point.

Mr. KAMOUL (Observer for Algeria) reiterated his commitment to the agreement, despite his understanding that Africa had not been given due consideration in the allocation of seats.

Mr. OKANIWA (Japan) said that his country attached considerable importance to the issue as evidenced by a global initiative on AIDS and population in which Japan was to invest some $30 billion over the next seven years. Concerning the allocation of seats, the inclusion of Japan in the Group of Asian States would not create a precedent for the adoption of future decisions in that regard. Japan had agreed to be part of the Group of Asian States in order to facilitate negotiations, not to set a precedent.

Ms. YANG-YANYI (China) said that she agreed with the composition of the Programme Coordinating Board, in view of its importance and the pressing need for it to be established. However, the allocation of seats was not fully in line with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993, under which it had been established. She was concerned that countries could decide which group they belonged to at will. That should not set a precedent for the functioning of other bodies. The seat that had been added was for the Group of Asian States as a whole and the outcome of the nominations should not be affected by the special circumstances of the case.

Another important issue which should be considered further was the participation in the Board of the representatives of the six co-sponsoring organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Mr. ELDEED (Egypt) said that the allocation of seats on the Programme Coordinating Board should not create a precedent. His delegation endorsed the agreement on the understanding that that was an issue which required the consensus of the international community. However, the need for equitable distribution of seats should be borne in mind, especially with regard to Africa, given that continent's difficult HIV/AIDS situation.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia) said that he was prepared to work with the Secretariat on the proposed decision. As the observer for Algeria had noted, it was important that the report on the agreement that Australia had presented to the Council should be included in the Council's documents. He would work with the Secretariat to that end, on the basis of the statement he had made to the Council.

The PRESIDENT said that, despite the reservations expressed by some delegations concerning some aspects of the report presented by Mr. Butler, there was overall agreement on the report. Moreover, in view of the importance of the question, it was likely that the report would be endorsed in a draft resolution or decision that Australia might wish to introduce.

Mr. KAMOUL (Observer for Algeria) requested that the comments made by Mr. Butler, his own delegation and any other delegations that so wished should be included in the report.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.